

### Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for surveying a plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is automatically tailored per user,  
5 comprising the steps of:

creating for each of said users a corresponding user profile containing a tailored sequence of questions and corresponding answers;

creating, at least periodically, one or more affinity groups for said users responsive of each of said corresponding user profile, each of said one or more

10 affinity groups having at least one user profile in an affinity group;

associating each user profile with at least one affinity group ~~and, if an association between a user profile and said at least one affinity group does not exist, then creating at least one new affinity group for said user profile, each affinity group containing at least one user profile;~~

15 presenting each user with a sequence of questions from a source containing a plurality of different questions, said sequence of questions and order of each question in said sequence of questions being independently, asynchronously, and dynamically tailored for each and every user on an individual basis responsive to both an answer received from each individual user to a  
20 question previously presented to said individual user and a particular affinity group or combination of affinity groups to which a profile of said individual user is associated; and

storing said user profile of said each user;

the steps repeated at least once more per user.

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2. – 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~said~~ at least one particular subsequent question from said sequence of questions is presented  
30 because of at least one of:

popularity of said subsequent questions within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups;

as a most frequently answered subsequent question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

5 as a most recently answered subsequent question within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein at least one question is capable of receiving an answer from said user that comprises an open text.

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6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 5, wherein said open text allows said user to add a new answer value for said question.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 6, wherein said new answer is  
15 used as one of a plurality of possible answers to said question when said question is subsequently posed to a second user.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein a question comprises at least two possible answers.

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9. (Original) The method of Claim 8, wherein said user may select more than one answer to said question.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 8, wherein said at least two  
25 possible answers are presented because of at least one of:

popularity of an answer within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups;

as a most frequent answer within said particular affinity group or combination of said affinity groups; and

30 as a most recent answer within said particular affinity group or combination

of said affinity groups.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the step of:

5        filtering said user profile, wherein said filtering comprises the application of a rules engine that compares said user profile to a set of predefined criteria.

12. (Cancelled)

10    13. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein said filtering step further comprises the step of:

      modifying without user intervention an answer to said question based on at least one of:

      predetermined criterion;  
15        at least one filtering rule;  
      consistency with previously answered questions;  
      consistency with all answered questions; and  
      consistency with answers of said particular affinity group or combination of  
      said affinity groups.

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14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said modification comprises at least one of omission of said answer, and tagging said user profile as inactive.

25    15. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
      periodically creating a new affinity group by associating at least one user profile of said users to said new affinity group.

16. – 17. (Cancelled)

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18. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:  
providing a report.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein generation of said  
5 report is constrained by one or more constraints comprising at least one of:  
an attribute of said user profile; and  
a reporting goal.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 19, wherein said goal comprises at least one  
10 of:  
a profile attribute value;  
a range of profile attribute values;  
a Boolean value reflective of a set of values;  
a Boolean value reflective of a set of non-values;  
15 a date range;  
a minimum count of matching profiles;  
a maximum count of matching profiles;  
a question filter;  
an affinity filter; and  
20 a match score threshold.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 19, further comprising the step of:  
weighting said constraints to provide a match score.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 19, said step of providing said  
25 report comprising the steps of:  
matching between at least a matchfield of said goal and a corresponding  
matchfield of at least one of an affinity group and a user profile, and  
generating a match score.

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23. (Original) The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of:  
determining at least one best match from a plurality of possible matches.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 23, further comprising the step of:  
5 arranging matches by order of match score, said order being grouped to at  
least two levels of matches, based on said score.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 22, said step of matching further comprising  
the step of:  
10 providing an aggregated score for said matching step; and  
weighting the importance of including said match in said report.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 24, said step of matching further  
comprising the step of:  
15 classifying each match score as one of:  
deterministic to meeting said goal; and  
non-deterministic to meeting said goal.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 19, wherein said goal is any of:  
20 a personal goal, wherein said personal goal is a result of a plurality of user  
inputs pertaining to personal aspirations; and  
an external goal, wherein said external goal is a result of a plurality of  
arbitrary inputs.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein said aggregated information  
25 comprises statistical information.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein a report resulting from a personal  
goal comprises:  
30 a comparison of a user having said user profile to at least one of:

a plurality of user profiles; and  
an affinity group.

30. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for performing a  
5 compensation survey of a plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is  
automatically tailored per user, comprising the steps of:

creating for each of said users a corresponding user profile containing a  
tailored sequence of questions and corresponding answers;

10 creating one or more affinity groups for said users responsive of said  
corresponding user profile, each of said one or more affinity groups having at least  
one user profile in an affinity group;

15 ~~associating each user profile with at least one existing affinity group and, if~~  
~~an association between a user profile and said at least one affinity group does not~~  
~~exist, then creating at least one new affinity group for said user profile, each~~  
~~affinity group containing at least one user profile;~~

20 presenting each user with a sequence of questions from a source  
containing a plurality of different questions, said sequence of questions and order  
of each question in said sequence of questions being independently,  
asynchronously, and dynamically tailored for each and every user on an individual  
basis responsive to both an answer received from each individual user to a  
question previously presented to said individual user and a particular affinity group  
or combination of affinity groups with which a profile of said individual user is  
associated;

25 and  
storing said user profile of said each user;  
wherein said affinity group comprises at least one of:  
profession;  
compensation;  
compensation range;  
30 experience;

experience range;  
position; and  
position range.

5 31. – 47. (Cancelled)

48. (Original) The method of Claim 30, further comprising the step of:  
providing a compensation report.

10 49. (Original) The method of Claim 48, said compensation report is constrained by  
at least one of:  
an attribute of said user profile; and  
a reporting goal.

15 50. (Cancelled)

51. (Original) The method of Claim 49, said goal comprising at least one of:  
a desired compensation;  
a desired range of compensation;  
20 a desired geographic location;  
a desired firm; and  
a desired range of firms.

25 52. – 56. (Cancelled)

57. (Original) The method of Claim 49, said goal comprising any of:  
a personal goal, wherein said personal goal is a result of a plurality of user  
inputs pertaining to personal aspirations; and  
an external goal, wherein said external goal is a result of a plurality of  
30 arbitrary inputs.

58. (Original) The method of Claim 57, said personal goal comprising at least one of:

5        compensation;  
      compensation range;  
      salary;  
      salary range;  
      geographic location;  
      position; and  
10       position range.

59. (Cancelled)

60. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 3059, wherein a report displaying  
15 said statistical information comprises at least one of:

      average salary;  
      median compensation;  
      median salary;  
      salary percentile;  
20       standard deviation;  
      trend;  
      profile count;  
      most frequent compensation; and  
      most frequent salary.

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61. (Cancelled)

62. (Original) The method of Claim 30, said compensation comprising at least one of:

30       annual salary;



monthly salary;

weekly salary;

hourly rate;

bonus;

5 tip;

benefits; and

vacation time.

63. – 91. (Cancelled)

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92. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for surveying a plurality of users with a sequence of questions that is automatically tailored per user, comprising the steps of:

15 presenting each user a sequence of questions that is independently, asynchronous, and dynamically tailored for each and every user of the plurality of users on an individual basis from a source containing a plurality of different questions, each user's answer to each of said sequence of questions being stored in a corresponding user profile;

20 determining, periodically an affinity of each of said corresponding user profile to compensation within one or more affinity groups, wherein each affinity group comprises a plurality of user profiles and wherein a user profile corresponds to at least one affinity group;

receiving answers from each user;

25 ~~storing said sequence of questions and corresponding answers in a unique user profile for each user;~~

~~determining if a corresponding affinity group exists for said user profile and, if so, associating said user profile with at least one or more affinity groups, , otherwise creating at least one new affinity group and associating said user profile with said new affinity group;~~

30 filtering said user profile, wherein said filtering comprises the application of

a rules engine that compares said user profile to a set of predefined criteria;  
modifying an answer if it is inconsistent with at least one of:

said user profile; and

said affinity group;

5 wherein determining an appropriate next question for said sequence of questions  
to be presented to said user on an individual basis, said appropriate next  
question, and a specific order in which said sequence of said questions are  
presented to each said user, being determined on an individual, user-by-user  
basis based on at least a particular affinity group or combination of affinity groups  
10 to which said user profile is associated and an answer to a previously presented  
question.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, further comprising the steps  
of:

15 at least periodically checking all user profiles; and  
attempting to generate at least an affinity group, wherein said affinity group  
comprises at least a user profile.

94. – 95. (Cancelled)

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96. (Previously Amended) The method of Claim 92, wherein a next question in  
said sequence of questions is determined based on at least one of:

popularity of said question within said particular affinity group or  
combination of said affinity groups;

25 a most frequently answered question within said particular affinity group or  
combination of said affinity groups; and

a most recently answered question within said particular affinity group or  
combination of said affinity groups; and  
in relation to said question.

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97. (Original) The method of Claim 94, further comprising the step of:

querying any of a database of a plurality of user profiles and a database of a plurality of affinity groups for a statistical report.

5 98. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 97, wherein said statistical report comprises at least one of:

average salary;

median compensation;

median salary;

10 salary percentile;

standard deviation;

trend;

profile count;

most frequent compensation; and

15 most frequent salary.

99.– 110. (Cancelled)

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